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Inter-Role Conflict, Role Strain and Role Play in Chile's Relationship with Brazil

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This article assesses the relationship Brazil–Chile in the economic and security cooperation fields from Chile's vantage point. Chile plays a number of different roles, among which its most salient one is 'global trader'. This role stretches beyond Brazil's expectations, but it converges with the social demands of Mexico and the United States as well as with the cues of the global market. Such a salient role – alongside the ones of mediator, bridge builder, and partner of Argentina in security cooperation issues – influences Chile's patterns of cooperation with and distance from Brazil as the regional power in South America.

Keywords: Chile–Brazil's relationship, role theory, free trade, regional cooperation, regional power, secondary power

Chile is a global trader, as it is among the countries with the most concluded Free Trade Agreements (FTA) anywhere in the world (Wehner and Thies, 2014). It has pursued a proactive strategy of inserting itself into the global economy ever since the mid-1990s. This FTA strategy of Chile is connected to its national economic model of export promotion, as first implemented under authoritarian rule in 1975. Although Chile is also a promoter of democracy and defender of human rights, both of which represent key aspects of its new post-authoritarian national identity, the model of export promotion has become the most salient characteristic in its foreign policy behaviour since re-democratisation in the 1990s, and has shaped the way in which Chile relates to the rest of South America – including Brazil (Wehner, 2011a, 2014). The global orientation of Chile, the lower level of prioritisation given by its government to regional integration schemes in South America and the country's lack of common borders with Brazil not only limits the potential for cooperation between the two states (cf. Malamud, 2011: 15); it also generates a mismatch with what Brazil expects from Chile, which is to follow its leadership initiatives, especially regarding regional groups. Chile seeks, via its foreign policy strategy of FTAs, to reduce political and economic dependence on regional and great powers, whereas Brazil as the regional power expects Chile to show a stronger vocation for South America (Mullins, 2006; Wehner, 2011b).

Against this backdrop, this article assesses the relationship between Brazil, a regional power, and Chile, a middle-sized state in the fields of economic policy and security from Chile's perspective. The article deals with the following questions: Why does Chile show a pattern of scepticism and sometimes of indifference to Brazil's leadership offer in South America? How does Chile's pattern of interaction towards Brazil unfold? The article also develops a symbolic interactionist role theory framework through which to better understand Chile's approach to Brazil's regional power. Using a symbolic interactionist role theoretic approach allows us to see the agential force of actors even under conditions of asymmetry as Chile's case vis-à-vis Brazil. Moreover, symbolic interactionist role theory goes beyond the

exclusive focus on one actor's self-understanding as holding a social position or category. 'A leadership role (...) is not only dependent upon its construction of itself as a leader; it is also dependent upon whether and how the surrounding world constructs it as a leader.' (Elgstrom, 2007: 446). In other words, whether or not Brazil claims to be a leader, mediator, security provider or a regional group integrationist state depends on whether other states such as Chile attributes or not such a condition. In addition, this approach focuses on the mutual constitution of roles between the self (ego) and the other (alter) as any role needs a counterrole (Thies, 2010). Roles are both a social position in an organised group and the type of actor is possible to be, which are constituted by ego's self-definition and alter expectations (Harnisch, 2011: 8). Thus, roles contain both the behavioral dimension or motivational dispositions sought by rationalist scholars, and the cultural repertoire sought by social constructivism (Wehner and Thies, 2014).

The first argument of this article is that the Chile–Brazil relationship experiences inter-role conflict over the patterns of expected behaviour within the region of South America. This inter-role conflict – understood as a conflict between non-compatible, competing or clashing role expectations about the self and other (Harnisch et al., 2011: 256) – emanates from the set of expectations that Brazil holds about Chile, which is to be a follower of Brazilian regional initiatives (see Malamud, 2011). Simultaneously, inter-role conflict emanates from Chile's role conceptions as a global free trader and an open regionalist, which exist in contrast to Brazil's preference that Chile plays a more integrationist and South American state role. Brazil sees itself as consensual leader (Burgess, 2008), whereas Chile does not see itself as a follower of Brazil in terms of security and economic issues, despite the fact that their positions in security affairs tend to converge. In terms of security, Chile has prioritised a bilateral relationship with Argentina, which has been key to developing a set of security conceptions and practices within the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) (Nolte and Wehner, 2014). This process of inter-role conflict can account for the observed process of

soft-balancing behaviour that Chile exhibits towards Brazil. It also accounts for understanding Chile's recognition of Brazil as a regional power (position in a social hierarchy) but not as a regional leader (social activity or function) - (see Flesmes and Wehner, 2015; Wehner, 2014).

The second argument that is advanced here is that Chile, as a social actor, possesses a rich role set – understood as the number of possible roles that an international actor has during its social life (see Aggestam, 2006) – but that such a richness also has its flaws. This is because Chile is sometimes obliged to accommodate the cues and demands of both the regional and international systems, as well as the expectations that are directed towards it by states such as Argentina, Brazil, the free trader states in the region, and the US as the global hegemon. All these demands from others, especially non-compatible ones, produce a process of role strain on the self – understood as the felt difficulty of the self (ego) in fulfilling role demands coming from the others (alter). Thus, role strain affects Chile's relationship with Brazil at the regional level while simultaneously Chile's role set – and especially its global trader role – tends to enable it to meet the projected expectations about its most desirable behaviour at the international level.

Bringing together the two arguments, this article claims that Brazil is indeed a significant other for Chile, although it is not first on the list. Instead, Argentina is key for defining Chile's most appropriate role in South America, especially in the security dimension of regional cooperation as expressed in UNASUR's South American Defence Council, whereas Mexico in Latin America and the US globally are seen as more important than Brazil for Chile's roles. A significant other can be a state one pays more attention to, as much as a role model to be emulated or can be an actor that shapes the role conception in a somewhat negative manner – that is, 'the type of actor you do not want to be' (see Beneš and Harnisch, 2015: 150). Even the most autonomous states in their foreign policy need others to define who they are and how to act accordingly to their expected patterns of behaviour. Having significant others to define the most appropriate role in a given interaction does not mean

actors like Chile lack sovereignty to pursue their own foreign policy independently of significant others. Whenever a state pursues its foreign policy goals, it does not do it in a social vacuum as the self always needs another actor to play a role. Thus, states always get involved in social interactions by following social cues of the surrounding environment or by approaching another state that communicates its expectations. This article positions itself within the research tradition on social identity, acknowledging that roles are a means to link identity and action (see McCourt, 2012; Thies, 2010; Breuning, 2011; Wehner and Thies, 2014). It also relies on interpretativism as methodology and the use of content and narrative analysis as method to recreate Chile's role set and the way it relates to Brazil in South America.

The remainder of this article proceeds as follows: First, the role theory framework is presented in light of Chile's relationship with Brazil, with an emphasis on the Chilean perspective. Second, Chile's foreign policy is analysed, wherein its available role set since 1990 to the present day is identified. This section also captures the key issues in Chile's relationship with Brazil – that is, economic and security cooperation as well as the expectations of Brazil as a regional power. Third, Brazil's and Chile's role relationships are assessed in a process-oriented manner, specifically from the vantage point of Chile using the triad of inter-role conflict, role strain and role play. The article focuses on the presidencies of Ricardo Lagos (2000–2006), Michelle Bachelet (2006–2010), Sebastian Piñera (2010–2014) and the first year of the second term of Bachelet (2014–present). Finally, the article concludes with an assessment of Chile's and Brazil's overall interaction, and their evolution in the last few years.

Inter-Role Conflict, Role Strain and Role Play

Symbolic interactionist role theory, which has been imported into foreign policy analysis from the disciplines of social psychology and sociology provides a rich conceptual apparatus for the study of a state's foreign policy (Breuning, 2011; Thies, 2010). Scholars working with this approach agree that it gives more agency to actors than its structural variant as it focuses on the social construction of roles and counterroles. Yet agents still move and operate within structural forces which shape but not determine their selection of roles (see Breuning, 2011; McCourt, 2012; Wehner and Thies, 2014). Other versions of role theory recreate the overtly structural bias and top-down approach of neorealism, in which roles emerge from pure material capabilities and the states' relative position in the international system (see Thies, 2013). In this sense, symbolic interactionist role theory also sees balancing and bandwagoning as social categories or roles that are built relationally, and not exclusively as provided by a material power structure as presented by neorealism. Analytically, foreign policy analysis role theory in its relational dimension also covers other types of patterns of behaviour that lie in-between balancing and bandwagoning if these two are not seen in a dichotomous way as neorealism does (Walker, 1987). Furthermore, it also incorporates the domestic needs and cultural repertoire of an international actor (Beneš and Harnisch, 2015), when neoclassical realism will only pay attention to how leaders respond and perceive systemic pressures, and thus will fall recurrently in the dichotomous pattern of either balancing or bandwagoning as structurally provided options.

Symbolic interactionist role theory has descriptive, organisational and explanatory value. The descriptive value is based on this approach's rich conceptual apparatus to describe events, whereas its organisational dimension lies in the capacity of role theory to cross and bring together different levels of analysis: people, states and system. The explanatory value of role theory is based on its ease to supplement other theoretical approaches or import aspects from them (see Thies, 2010).

Furthermore, symbolic interactionist role theory distinguishes between significant and general others when an actor first conceives a role. A general other is an abstract social category to which an actor relates so as to develop a sense of belonging to an in-group, such as for example, Latino, Latin American, South American, European or human (cf. Beneš and Harnisch, 2015: 150). In contrast – and key to understanding the interactions between Brazil and Chile – a significant other can take the form of a socialiser, role model or an actor that is used as a counterpoint on what you do not want to be as social being (Beneš and Harnisch, 2015). In this sense, a role conception encompasses an actor's self-image and perception of its social position vis-à-vis the effects of the other's position(s) and expectations (Elgström and Smith, 2006: 5). Role play or performance is the actual pattern of behaviour once a role has been selected (see Thies, 2010).

An international actor like Chile can have different significant others, something that can trigger inter-role conflict and induce role strain behaviour on the part of the self – especially if the social settings for the self's role play tend to overlap or are somehow nested within each other. For instance, the regions of South America, Latin America and the Americas are nested, while regional groups within them tend to overlap and have linkages with each other – examples of this are the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) (1991), the Pacific Alliance (2012), UNASUR, and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) (2010). This is also the case whenever an actor has several significant others within the same setting and when their expectations compete with each other, or at least do not converge. This is, for example, the case with the CELAC, wherein three key actors for Chile are also members of the organisation (Argentina, Brazil and Mexico), or regionally when we refer to the Americas, where the US needs to be included as a significant other for Chile. Furthermore, actors need to internalise social cues emanating from the global level, as Chile does regarding the rules of the game of economic globalisation (Wehner, 2014).

Thus, actors moving and operating in different social settings and at various levels tend to possess rich role sets that may vary over time in terms of composition and number of roles therein (Aggestam, 2006). Some roles can also be dropped altogether from the role set, while others can be only seldom activated. For example, in the Hugo Chávez era Venezuela dropped its US partner role to enact the one of a revolutionary state instead. However, as argued, roles originating from different institutional contexts can experience inter-role conflict, as the interplay of different role conceptions ‘entails compromises and ambiguities in order to manage competing expectations’ (Aggestam, 2006: 23). Implicitly, the co-existence of role conceptions is a constant process of ego (Chile in this case) reading the cues and demands of generalised others, such as economic globalisation and the direct expectations of significant others, because the expectations coming from alter may also experience variation over time, across institutional settings and across issue-areas.

Inter-role conflict, role strain and role play unfolds in an interrelated manner within the complexity of social life. Inter-role conflict between the self and the other triggers a role strain in the self as reaction to multiple and competing expectations. An inter-role conflict can take different forms going from disruptive behaviour in a violent way to soft contestation of a specific action without the use of sanctions from the other to the self. Role strain of the self is being experienced while the actor plays or performs roles (role play) vis-à-vis external expectations of others. It is the action of playing a role that produce acceptance or distance from others based on others’ expectations. In other words, inter-role conflict, role strain and role play are intertwined and mutually reinforce each other. Yet, the role conceptions of Chile and Brazil are taken as given in this analysis as it is well documented that Brazil’s role conception is of a consensus-seeking regional power that would like to enact the role of leader in South America, whereas Chile has played in a more salient manner the role of free trader (see Burges, 2008; Malamud, 2011; Wehner, 2014; Flesmes and Wehner, 2015). Brazil expects to be followed whereas Chile’s free trader role put the focus of its actions beyond Latin

America. Chile also sees regional integration initiatives with distance and scepticism unless they take the form of non-binding diplomatic arenas of dialogue and cooperation in security issues. Thus, Chile plays different roles, but not all of them are attributed by Brazil as the regional power since some of the roles of Chile instead meet other states' expectations and not Brazil's. In consequence, Chile's relationship towards Brazil also has to be looked at from a broader perspective as Chile also interacts with those other states which are more significant for its model of development, its interests, and for the narrative about the type of actor that it aspires to be on the international stage.

Chile's Roles and Its Relationship with Brazil

Role Set

Chile has played the global trader role right from the beginning of the new democratic government (1990) (Mullins, 2006). The leaderships of different presidents were key to the advancement of the global trader role and to solving the role contestation process at the domestic level. Whereas Chile followed the flow of economic globalisation, this structural force was not deterministic of Chile's choices, from among a pool of options, regarding how to insert itself into the global market – that is, what mode of insertion to follow such as bilateralism and/or regional integration, and/or with what countries and regions to consolidate economic ties via FTAs (see Wehner and Thies, 2014).

Thus, Chile's free trader role has to co-exist with domestic and regional others' expectations about the overall place of South America in Chile's foreign policy elite narrations. During most of the early 1990s the foreign policy elite of Chile sought to advance

political and economic relations with most other Latin American countries, via trade agreements (Van Klaveren, 2011). However these accords, which had a limited scope given that they liberalised only a select few products, were not the core of Chile's trade strategy as it was looking more actively for trade agreements with countries outside the region – and the type of accords envisaged followed the model of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In fact Chile did at one point attempt to become a member of NAFTA, but the failure of the US congress to give fast-track authorisation to the Executive regarding negotiation with Chile made the realisation of such a goal ultimately impossible. As an alternative, Chile instead decided to pursue a strategy of achieving bilateral FTAs with its most important trade partners, like for example, the US, the EU and Japan (Porrás, 2003).

Chile experienced inter-role conflict during the negotiation of the Free Trade Association of the Americas (FTAA) which was launched in 1994 and stalled in 2005. Chile experienced a disparity between US and Brazilian expectations. The latter expected to negotiate the FTAA as a MERCOSUR and South American bloc, whereas the US expected to pursue only small-scale bilateral talks under the umbrella of this multilateral negotiation (Fernandois, 2011: 39). Chile attributed to the US the role of leader of this endeavour and to Mexico the role of bridge builder, given the latter's experiences of negotiating with the US during the NAFTA talks. This meant that Chile did not follow the overall expectations of Brazil, though Chile did selectively adopt the negotiation position of South American states regarding the further liberalisation of the export of agricultural products to the US – a position in alignment with the Brazilian one. However this stance reflects the role strain underlying Chile's behaviour, as it also tried to accommodate part of Brazil's and also Argentina's expectations as much as it did those of the US.

Furthermore, under the presidencies of Eduardo Frei and Ricardo Lagos Chile signed most of its key FTAs. While Chile signed an FTA with the US as its main partner in 2002, it also pursued parallel and subsequent FTA negotiations with other industrialised countries and

regions – such as the European Union (2002), Republic of Korea (2003), China (2006) and Japan (2007) so as to avoid ending up in a position of complete economic and political dependence on the US (Wehner, 2011a). Nevertheless, Chile developed a narrative of ‘partners’ and the role of ally vis-à-vis the US (Fermendois, 2011). A similar logic applies to the associate membership status achieved within MERCOSUR (1996) and the need to reduce economic and political dependence on both this bloc and on its leader Brazil (Wehner, 2011b). Thus, Chile sought to play an open regionalist role so as to be able to accommodate both its FTA strategy and the expectations that the country would honour its commitment to regional initiatives, although Brazil would still have preferred Chile’s full membership within MERCOSUR – and thus that it enacted instead an outright integrationist role.

However, the free trader and open regionalist roles are not the only ones that Chile has available to it. Other roles lie within the spheres of traditional political-diplomatic and security issues. However, a role like the open regionalist one also permeates these issues, especially when it comes to roles that are being played bilaterally or within regional groupings. Chile plays the role of bilateral partner and ally of Argentina in the South American context; a role that it has also tried to play vis-à-vis Brazil. However, the salient expectation of Brazil was that this bilateral partnership would also involve an integrationist vocation and a commitment to regional initiatives on Chile’s part. In addition, Chile also cast the role of associate state in its interactions with MERCOSUR members (Fuentes, 2011). Regarding Brazil, Chile has also played the role of soft-balancer within regional institutions such as UNASUR (in tandem with Argentina), as well as by creating a new regional scheme in collaboration with Colombia, Mexico and Peru – namely, the Pacific Alliance (Flemes and Wehner, 2015; Wehner, 2014). When it comes to bilateral relations, Chile exhibits the role of strategic partner, ally and collaborator with Argentina in the security and commercial domains despite existing problems in their commercial relationship (cf. Lorenzini, 2012) – whereas with Bolivia and Peru, Chile enacts the roles of distant neighbour and rival instead (Van

Klaveren, 2011: 156–159). In fact, the role of ally and partners in security co-operation with Argentina has been key for the development of the South American Defence Council. Chile and Argentina have played a leadership role in this organism of UNASUR. In fact, the regional security goals and interests between Chile and Brazil converge in the SDC on having mediation, confidence building and conflict resolution mechanisms. However, the experience used to develop a road map for the SDC is based on the bilateral and cooperative relationship with Argentina advanced since the 1990s (see Nolte and Wehner, 2014), which indicates that the most significant actor for Chile in regional security cooperation is Argentina and not Brazil.

Chile also has in its repertoire the roles of mediator and conflict solver, as well as of peacekeeper. Recently, Chile played the mediator and conflict solver roles, via the institutional apparatus of UNASUR, to help during the governability crisis in Bolivia (2008). These roles were able to be played because Brazil, as leader of UNASUR, wanted to legitimate and make clear the value and importance of this newly created institution (Nolte and Wehner, 2014). The peacekeeper role, meanwhile, has been performed by Chile in Haiti, where the former has been one of the leading nations (along with Argentina and Brazil) in the carrying out of the peace operation MINUSTAH ever since 2004 (Feldmann et al., 2011).

The peacekeeper role has been previously played by Chile as well through the medium of United Nations mandates in different conflicts around the globe, such as those in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1997) and East Timor (2000). In the future it is likely that the peacekeeper role is to be played along with Argentina as both states have a binational peacekeeping operation force called *Cruz del Sur*. A related role is that of being a promoter of democracy and defender of human rights in both regional and international institutions. Chile, given its own authoritarian past, has in recent decades become a staunch promoter of democracy and human rights; it was a key driver and promoter of the Inter-American Democratic Charter that was

approved in 2001 (Fuentes, 2006: 113–118), and supported the inclusion of democratic clauses in the mandates of regional groups such as UNASUR and CELAC.

This Chilean role set has retained a certain amount of internal stability over time, especially since the return to democracy and the beginning of the first FTA negotiations. One reason for such stability in available roles is that Chile has kept a salient model of export promotion, has become one of the most stable democracies in Latin America and has been an active supporter of multilateral institutions promoting global norms such as the responsibility to protect, democracy and human rights. Some of the aforementioned roles are central to understanding Chile's current role relationship with Brazil, whereas others are more marginal and activated only in specific social settings. In this regard, those roles that shape in a more direct way this bilateral relationship are the global trader, open regionalist, soft-balancer and Argentina's security partner ones – alongside as well the bridge builder and ally of the US. Chile's roles played vis-à-vis Brazil and the latter's role expectations currently do not match up. Brazil expects Chile to drop its politics of contestation and to instead follow and accept Brazil's enactment of roles such as leader and security provider, as well as regional integrator (see Flesmes and Wehner, 2015; Wehner, 2014).

Inter-Role Conflict, Role Strain and Role Play

When Michelle Bachelet took power first time around, Chile's image amongst South American states was under question. The perception of South American others was that Chile was showing an international vocation at the expense of South America, specifically by the country playing a global trader, US partner and above all an open regionalist role. Within this pool of roles there was no room for Chile to enact a purely regional integrationist and a South Americanist role, as Brazil and others expected of it. For instance, Chile was at the time criticised by both Bolivia and Peru for being a bad neighbour given its historically rooted

tensions with both over border issues. In fact, President Ricardo Lagos was forced to directly confront these negative expectations especially those coming from Bolivia over the ongoing access to the sea issue (see Wehner, 2011c). Part of the distance between Chile and Brazil lies in the latter's attempt to play a leader and mediator role, as Brazil offered – should both parties be willing to accept it – to mediate in this sea access issue. This offer was turned down by Chile (Tokatlian, 2013). Brazil's suggestion along with the expressed sympathies of Argentina and Venezuela for Bolivia's claim was also interpreted by Chile's foreign policy elite as an indicator that Chile was an integrated country at the international level but an isolated one in South America (Wehner, 2011b). This view of Chile's foreign policy elite shows a role strain process triggered by competing external expectations, because Chile did not know whether to continue playing the open regionalist role in the same way, to redefine the scope of this role or to supplement it with a more salient South American role and narrative.

The abovementioned role strain process does not mean inactivity on Chile's side at the regional and international levels. In fact, Chile's approach to MERCOSUR, FTAs and UNASUR illustrate Chile's activeness to respond to competing expectations (inter-role conflict) and its subsequent felt role strain. During Lagos' presidency Chile signed most of its FTA agreements – including with the US and the EU. In fact, these actors expected Chile to subsequently continue on the track of FTAs. Moreover, they also attributed to Chile the stature of it being a good citizen and a role model for South American states on how to navigate the world of economic globalisation (Fuentes, 2006). Conversely, regional expectations – including those of Brazil – were that Chile should show a stronger inclination towards regional integration schemes, especially MERCOSUR, as well as demonstrate more active participation in South American affairs beyond its bilateral interactions with states from this region. In fact, then Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2003) invited Chile to become full member of MERCOSUR, a proposal that was welcomed by

Ricardo Lagos but dropped later on the grounds of MERCOSUR having higher tariffs than Chile. However, for Chile an eventual entrance to MERCOSUR as a full member was not only a matter of tariffs but also of autonomy and the attribution of full powers to Brazil as the leader of this group (cf. Mullins, 2006: 123). In addition, Chile was also a reluctant actor in the idea of launching UNASUR – formerly known as Community of South American Nations – especially during the summits of Cuzco (2004) and Brasilia (2005). Once it was clear that the pillars of the group did not compromise Chile's economic sovereignty and UNASUR was conceived as an arena to discuss diplomatic and security issues, Chile showed a stronger commitment to this project (Flisfisch, 2011: 127).

Michelle Bachelet sought to ameliorate the negative externalities brought about by the global trader role being played in a salient manner during the presidency of Ricardo Lagos. Bachelet's first step was to approach Bolivia and launch a bilateral agenda of cooperation that included the issue of sea access, while she also took on a leading role within UNASUR (Fuentes, 2011). Thus, Chile took three foreign policy initiatives during Bachelet's presidency: first, it exercised the first pro-temporary presidency of UNASUR; second, it played the role of articulator and mediator, via UNASUR, to solve the internal conflict that had been triggered by secessionist movements rising against Bolivian president Evo Morales (2008); and, third, it enacted, in tandem with Argentina, the role of leader in the articulation of the security conceptions agenda of the UNASUR's South American Defence Council (Nolte and Wehner, 2014).

The enactment of a more South Americanist role – alongside making Chile's narrative about its economic success (free trader role) and its partnership with the US under Bachelet's government less salient– can be interpreted as a reaction to the then existing inter-role conflict with South American powers – mainly with Bolivia and its supporter Venezuela, as well as with Brazil as the regional power. Bachelet's strategy of showing a more salient vocation for South America and for regional groupings was strategic in nature, as it served Chile's interest

of being 're-accepted' by regional peers. At the same time, however, it also allowed Chile to continue to play the roles of free trader and open regionalist by negotiating FTAs, mainly in Asia. Chile's active participation in UNASUR was also important as the country could exert control over the agenda either by promoting topics that were in its own interest (security and defence issues) or by stalling other ones (commercial issues if necessary, and deeper integration and institutionalisation attempts). Furthermore, Chile's behaviour was also in line with a policy of accommodating Brazil's expectations through playing the region-related roles in a more salient manner. Not only were the region-oriented roles key to reducing the effects of the role strain that had led Chile to unfold a policy of accommodating Brazil's expectations, but so was the enactment of a bridge-builder role too. In fact, Michele Bachelet, Evo Morales and Brazilian president Lula da Silva launched a joint project to connect the three countries via a bi-oceanic corridor. In this way, Brazil could have access to Chilean harbours and Chile would become a hub state helping connect the Brazilian economy to those of the Asia-Pacific region (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, 2007).

Thus, Chile pursued a strategy of reducing the role strain pattern by accommodating Brazil's expectations. Chile was successfully able to manage the inter-role conflict by playing multiple different roles (integrator, leader, conflict solver and bridge builder) and by, furthermore, infusing each of them with a narrative about Chile being both a Latin American and South American player – the platform from which it deepens its insertion into the global market as an international actor. This was nothing new in Chile's rhetoric; this time around, however, there were key actions taken so as to sustain the validity of these type of statements by Bachelet's government. Nevertheless, Chile still did not completely bridge or close the expectation gap with Brazil, since it simultaneously continued to play its free trader role. However, this role was now being played in a more subtle way than it had been under the previous government.

During the presidency of Sebastian Piñera it is also possible to observe a pattern of inter-role conflict occurring vis-à-vis Brazil as the regional power. Chile's most salient role played during this period was its free trader one. This role was accompanied by a narrative about Chile's economic success. However Chile under Piñera also innovated in its role repertoire, and also in the way in which it played both the free trader role and the open regionalist one. Chile nested the free trader role inside the open regionalist one by supporting the creation and institutionalisation of the Pacific Alliance. This regional group is a commercially driven initiative, which is constituted by Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru – recently Costa Rica has also joined the group as a full member. The Pacific Alliance seeks to create a free trade area in Latin America. It builds on the existing bilateral FTAs between its member states. The main political effects of this new group are that it excludes Brazil and has brought Mexico, as a key partner for Chile, into the South American regional space (see Gobierno de Chile, 2011). In fact, this new regional group challenges the narrative of Brazil being a South American power (cf. Spektor, 2010). In fact, the Pacific Alliance also includes Costa Rica and Mexico. Chile sees Mexico and this group as a medium through which to soft-balance Brazil's foreign policy behaviour in South America (Nolte and Wehner, 2013; Wehner, 2014).

In terms of role expectations, Brazil identifies Chile as one of the main leaders of the group. In fact, the non-occurrence of a bilateral official state visit by Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff to Chile under Piñera's presidency has been interpreted by the Chilean political elite as an expression of Brazil's discontent about the Pacific Alliance's existence and about Chile's role as one of the main articulators of such an initiative (Monge, 2013). Brazil sees the Pacific Alliance as detrimental to the MERCOSUR project. In fact, Brazil has strived to regain its capacity to set the regional agenda by informing the MERCOSUR countries – and especially Paraguay and Uruguay – that joining the Pacific Alliance is not an independent choice. For Brazil this is a collective decision-making process of MERCOSUR

(Dobal, 2014). Further, the Pacific Alliance can also play a pivotal role in the negotiation of the trans-pacific partnership agreement (TPP) led by the US as a way to create a FTA that links both continental sides of the Pacific Ocean – the TPP is an ongoing negotiation process that includes Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the US and Vietnam (Nolte and Wehner, 2013b). In fact, Piñera gave greater priority to the Pacific Alliance and the TPP than to Chile's involvement in UNASUR and its relationship with Brazil.

Thus, Chile enacted both the open integrationist role and the free trader one in a rather proactive way by prioritising the Pacific Alliance and the TPP. Moreover, by pursuing this strategy Chile also played a soft-balancer role vis-à-vis Brazil and its regional initiatives. Chile did not take into consideration the full spectrum of Brazil's expectations, as it instead prioritised its own national model of economic development as much as it did the social demands of two significant others for Chile's roles – that is, Mexico and the US (Wehner, 2014). In UNASUR, Chile continued to play the role of collaborator and expert in security cooperation issues with Argentina. In this constellation, Brazil – despite being a significant other for Chile's role conceptions – came in fourth place in the ranking of the most important significant others. Thus, Chile experienced inter-role conflict vis-à-vis Brazil's expectations, because it gave priority instead to the expectations of other states which were similar in their economic model to Chile and that furthermore mirrored Chile's foreign policy tradition of being a free trader, such as Mexico, Colombia and Peru. Moreover, Chile prioritised its role relationships with Argentina, Mexico and the US rather than with Brazil as the regional power. Nevertheless Chile did still try to connect with Brazil's expectations via UNASUR participation, but once again Chile's priority interests during this period were dedicated to groups other than UNASUR – specifically, the Pacific Alliance. Paradoxically, the inter-role conflict with Brazil triggered by Piñera's foreign policy increased Chile's need to accommodate Brazil's expectations under Bachelet's second mandate.

In fact, the re-election of Bachelet led to an adjustment of Chile's foreign policy in words and deeds. The new narrative now indicates that Chile is trying to react to the role strain experienced so as to accommodate the competing expectations emanating from the regional and international systems and from its various significant others. Regarding Brazil, Chilean minister of foreign affairs Heraldo Muñoz proposed to adopt a model of integration that incorporates the different realities of MERCOSUR and the Pacific Alliance, in a similar way to the EU model of respecting the different member states speeds in the integration process, as a means to bridge and reconcile both projects (La Tercera, 2014a). Later, he also suggested that the Pacific Alliance is not an exclusive group, and that its vocation is integrative in a broad sense. In fact, he has also proposed that the Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUR should coordinate their policies and establish regular meetings between both sides, in a sort of 'concert' between their respective member states (La Tercera, 2014b). As such, the current approach of Chile is both to keep playing its role as global trader and open regionalist state as well as to the same extent to accommodate Brazil's expectation as the regional power that were not fulfilled during the earlier presidency of Sebastian Piñera.

Conclusion

This article has offered a broader perspective on the Chile–Brazil relationship from Chile's vantage point than is normally taken in the academic literature. Chile's chosen approach to Brazil is shaped by its own rich role set and how it tries to reconcile its most salient roles (global trader and open regionalist) vis-à-vis the expectations of both Brazil as well as of other significant others. The article has shown that Chile is constantly trying to reconcile different sets of competing expectations, coming in the form of social cues emanating from the global economy as a structural force and of direct role expectations put forward by

significant others located in South America (Argentina and Brazil), Latin America (Mexico) and the Americas as a whole (the US). Chile as a global trader gives priority to those states that adhere to the premises of the global market and offer an attractive market for its products. Regionally speaking, Chile's significant other – at least regarding collaboration over security issues – is first Argentina and then Brazil. Thus Brazil is indeed a significant other for Chile in this domain, although it is not first on the list. This fourth place of Brazil for Chile's in its broad set of role relationships explain why Chile shows a pattern of scepticism to the offered leadership of Brazil as a regional power.

Nevertheless, Brazil is still an important player for Chile. Brazil is without doubt a regional power, but not necessarily a regional leader for Chile – at least not in all possible issue-areas. In this sense, Chile seems to be acquiescing to Brazilian leadership in a rather selective way as most of its foreign policy priorities in fact lie beyond South America and follow its most salient role – that is, the one of global free trader. Most of Chile's other roles are played in support of this free trader role, such as the bridge-builder, US partner, and open regionalist ones. This is not to say that Chile does nothing at all about incorporating Brazil's expectations regarding patterns of desirable behaviour in South America. As it has been shown, Chile acts and reacts when it experiences role strain vis-à-vis Brazil's expectations. Chile responds to the expectations of Brazil by pursuing behaviour that reconciles its global trader and open regionalist roles with the demand of Brazil to commit in a more convincing manner to the regional integration ethos being promoted by the regional power. Even here, though, Chile pursues cooperative efforts on security and defence issues with Argentina (within UNASUR) as its first option.

Under Bachelet's first government Chile showed more of a regional vocation than in the Piñera years, when it behaved in a way more closely aligned with Brazil's expectations. Under Piñera, Chile enacted the open regionalist and global trader roles in a more straightforward manner – doing this increased the gap between the two states. However, even

here Chile tried to reconcile the expectations of Brazil by allocating resources to the UNASUR project and by constantly trying to enhance its bilateral relations with Brazil, efforts that were not reciprocated by the government of Dilma Rousseff. Finally, the inter-role conflict experienced under the previous government led Bachelet in her second term to deal with the role strain specifically by trying to serve as a bridge between the Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUR, and in that way Chile attempted to better fulfil the expectations of Brazil as the regional power.

With this in mind Chile's approach to Brazil needs to be observed from a broader perspective; regarding its significant others, meanwhile, their patterns of cooperation and competition – as well as closeness and distance – must be closely scrutinised if they are to be properly understood. In other words, the role approach advanced herein tells us about the processes and reasonings that cause states to adopt what appear to be patterns of balancing and bandwagoning – when these two are analysed as the behavioural outcomes of a relational interaction. Examining inter-role conflict, role strain and role play provides a comprehensive understanding of the existing patterns of interaction between Chile and Brazil, and moreover of how these interactions are part of a broader set of options that Chile has available to it as ways to reaffirm its identity and achieve its foreign policy interests in South America, Latin America and beyond.

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